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**TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY WORKING GROUP  
of the  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS**

**June 24, 2008  
Minutes**

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**THE FOLLOWING MINUTES ARE A SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY WORKING GROUP. AN AUDIOCASSETTE TAPE OF THE ACTUAL MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR LISTENING IN SCAG'S OFFICE.**

The Meeting of the Transportation Conformity Working Group was held at the SCAG office in Los Angeles.

**In Attendance:**

Abrishami, Lori	LACMTA
Litschi, Michael	OCTA
Poe, Lisa	SANBAG
Sells, Eyvonne	AQMD
Shavit, Avital	LACMTA

**SCAG Staff**

Asuncion, John  
Nadler, Jonathan  
Sherwood, Arnie  
Stewart, Justus

**Via Teleconference:**

Alvarez, Grace	RCTC
Behtash, Arman	Caltrans, District 12
Bloom, Bob	SIS
Brady, Mike	Caltrans Headquarters
Cacatian, Ben	Ventura County APCD
Chandon, Mimi	Caltrans, District 8
Fagan, Paul	Caltrans, District 8
Johnson, Sandy	Caltrans, District 11
Kratovil, Aimee	FHWA
Lambroski, Rafael	Caltrans, District 11
Lopez, Rosa	IVAG
Louka, Tony	Caltrans, District 8
O'Connor, Karina	U.S. EPA, Region 9
Wade, Dennis	ARB

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Walecka, Carla  
Yoon, Andrew

Transportation Corridor Agencies  
Caltrans, District 7

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

Michael Litschi, OCTA, called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

**2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

There were no comments.

**3.0 CONSENT CALENDAR**

**3.1 Approval Item**

**3.1 TCWG May 27, 2008 Meeting Minutes**

The minutes were approved.

**4.0 INFORMATION ITEMS**

**4.1 RTP Update**

Jonathan Nadler, SCAG, gave the TCWG an update on the 2008 RTP. He reported that the RTP process has been completed, and that SCAG received a positive conformity finding.

Lori Abrishami, LACMTA, informed the TCWG that a \$214 million grant from the federal government has been secured to look into high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes. There are two preliminary corridors that MTA is currently considering, the 210 and the 10. The money was initially available to New York but New York was not able to use the money so it was granted to Los Angeles County. MTA is currently working with SCAG on how to incorporate the project into the RTP. The HOT lane project will be presented to the MTA Board in July.

Paul Fagan, Caltrans District 8, questioned whether a recent STIP action by the California Transportation Commission regarding the completion dates of a few projects requires an RTP amendment. Jonathan Nadler, SCAG, responded that staff would need to review the details to determine whether an amendment was

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necessary, and whether other issues might arise. This was the first time that the issue had been brought to the attention of SCAG staff.

**4.2     RTIP Update**

John Asuncion, SCAG, reported that the 2008 RTIP is currently undergoing its 30-day public review. The last day for SCAG to receive comments on the RTIP is July 7<sup>th</sup>. Thus far there has been two public hearing on the 2008 RTIP. No comments have been received from either hearing. The last public hearing will be held on June 25<sup>th</sup> at the Orange County Transportation Authority. The 2006 RTIP Amendment #17 received federal approval on June 13<sup>th</sup>. Staff is currently processing another amendment for the 2006 RTIP that will be submitted to Caltrans by the week of June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**4.3     SIP Update**

Dennis Wade, Air Resources Board (ARB), stated that the Ventura County, Antelope Valley, and Mojave Desert Air Districts have all completed local adoption of their air quality plans. Those plans will be considered for adoption at the ARB hearing held on June 26<sup>th</sup> in Sacramento. The ozone and PM10 SIP development process continues in Imperial County for action later in the year.

Question was raised as to whether the EPA had provided guidance on how to handle the downwind transport issue for the SIPs. Karina O'Connor, EPA, stated that there is no new guidance on this issue.

**4.4     Review of PM Hot Spot Interagency Review Forms**

**1) SBd4351** – Realign and widen a 9.3-miles segment of SR-58 from PM 21.8 to PM 31.1 in an unincorporated area of San Bernardino County, east of the City of Barstow.

It was requested that the consultants who submitted the project description to modify the following:

- Correct horizon year date typo (from 2016 to 2040).
- Provide explanation as to why the build and no-build values are the same.
- Clarify the rural location of the project.

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Once the form is revised and provided to SCAG, staff will re-circulate it and pending approval from EPA, FHWA, and ARB, will list it as not a POAQC.

- 2) **SBd200451** – Widen the segment of US-395 that extends from PM 4.0 to PM 19.3.

It was requested that the consultants who submitted the project description modify the following:

- Provide explanation as to why the build and no-build values are the same.
- Clarify the project description.

Once the form is revised and provided back to SCAG, staff will re-circulate it and pending approval from EPA, FHWA, and ARB, will list it as not a POAQC.

- 3) **RIV46460** – Proposes to improve 7.4 miles of SR-79 in an unincorporated area of Riverside County, north of the City of Murrieta.

It was determined that this is not a POAQC.

- 4) **ORA030310** – Construct an auxiliary lane in the Southbound direction of SR-55 between the Dyer Road on-ramp and the MacArthur Avenue off-ramp in the City of Sana Ana in the County of Orange.

It was determined that this is not a POAQC.

Review of Qualitative Analysis

**LAE0465** – Andrew Yoon, Caltrans, stated that Caltrans had previously submitted its PM2.5 and PM10 qualitative analysis to the TCWG. At that time, the TCWG declined reviewing the project because the project was not in the fiscally constrained RTP and RTIP. The project is now in the fiscally constrained RTP and is therefore considered a full project.

Caltrans is proposing the addition of an HOV lane from the junction of SR-14 to Parker Road interchange with I-5, a distance of approximately 13.6 miles, and two truck lanes from north of SR-14 to the Pico/Lyons interchange.

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The analysis concludes that the project will not increase emissions and is not a POAQC. Mr. Yoon requested that the TCWG provide comments directly to Caltrans. Once the comments are reviewed and clarified by a sub-group of the TCWG, a determination will be made.

**4.5     Review Definition of Auxiliary Lanes**

There was discussion on the definition of auxiliary lanes for conformity purposes. Mike Brady, Caltrans, stated that the Highway Design Manual has a very general definition of an auxiliary lane. It is essentially anything that is not a through lane. This would include left turn lanes, acceleration lanes, deceleration lanes, passing lanes, etc. However, Caltrans has evolved its own definition that is much more limited, in order to review projects in greater detail. The definition of an auxiliary lane for conformity purposes is a lane that does not fully extend between two nodes. However, there is also the consideration for those areas where the nodes are far apart, such that such a facility may not be considered an auxiliary lane if it is greater than ½ mile in length.

**4.6     TCM Substitution**

Jonathan Nadler reported on two previous TCM projects in which the project sponsors identified some obstacles to implementation. One was a small bike lane and the other was bus stop improvements. SCAG has been working with MTA to identify new projects that are not yet programmed that could substitute for each of these projects. A preliminary draft report has been provided for the TCWG to review; once staff gets feedback from the TCWG the draft reports will be released for public review.

It was pointed out that one of the conditions for considering a project a TCM was whether the project would reduce vehicle trips and emissions. For a bus stop improvement, which transit agencies undertake regularly, there are reasonable questions as to whether the criteria for designating such projects as TCMs are met. There is not currently any quantitative methodology showing reduced vehicle trips and emissions from such a project. A suggestion was made that SCAG staff and the TCWG go back and look at the language in the original SIP, to see if bus stop improvements fit into one of the listed TCM categories. Karina O'Connor, EPA, will provide EPA's perspective on the bus stop substitution report prior to public

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release. It was also suggested that the larger question of what constitutes a TCM should be taken up by a sub-committee of the TCWG.

An overview of TCMs will be included on the next meeting's agenda, including how TCMs are programmed, how they roll over, and substitutions.

**5.0    INFORMATION SHARING**

Agency contacts were briefly discussed.

Ben Cacatian, Ventura County APCD, suggested a discussion of Conformity SIP's be put on the July TCWG agenda.

**6.0    ADJOURNMENT**

Michael Litschi adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

The next Transportation Conformity Working Group meeting will be held on July 22, 2008 at the SCAG office in Los Angeles.